

Briefing Paper on "Rotation"

Whether held by managers or employees, there appears to be widespread perception that there are many barriers to movement in the Agency. A corollary is the belief that comparatively few individuals have changed components or Directorates.

The Executive Advisory Group asked the Office of Personnel to look into the record with respect to rotation. What it found was reassuring to Agency management. It can be demonstrated that management is taking an active part in promoting those kinds of rotation that support executive development and provide needed skills. With respect to employee-initiated rotation, it is apparent that employees can and do take initiative to qualify for and to obtain better jobs within the Agency. This process is being assisted through career counseling.

Actually we find that there has been extensive movement within the Agency. In a large representative sample of the Agency's employees, one-third answered Yes to the question, "Have you ever served in more than one Directorate? (Actually held a different position in another Directorate)". To the related question, "Have you served in more than one component within your Directorate? (Actually held a different position in another component)", 47 percent responded Yes. (See Table 1).

Management of course has interest in the kinds and amount of inter-Directorate flow. How much of it is developmental or based on the identification of individuals who would benefit from an assignment in another Directorate? How much of it is the result of searching across Directorate lines for an individual qualified to fill a position becoming

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During 1975, [] rotational assignments were for developmental purposes while [] were to meet need for skills. (See Table 2). Actually, the number of such inter-Directorate assignments exceeded the projection for the year in the Annual Personnel Plan [] compared to ^{expectation} exception of []

Despite these facts, we find that only 20 percent of the employees surveyed replied Yes to the question, "Is there adequate opportunity to transfer among the various Directorates in the Agency?" Only 38 percent felt that there is adequate opportunity for rotational assignments to other positions within their own Career Service. (See Table 3).

From management's view, there is evidence of a substantial amount of mobility within the Agency, even across Directorate lines. From the employee's viewpoint, this mobility is not adequate. Why?

Some difference in perception of adequacy is inherent in the management responsibility to match job requirements and qualified individuals, with personal interests and considerations necessarily being subordinated to the Agency's requirements for the employee's services. [] statement of policy on reassignments). The individual's preferences are considered but are not the dominant consideration.

Considerations that affect change of assignment are truly multidimensional. Some of these dimensions which differentiate the kind of job movement involved are:

- ° Is it in one's speciality or not?
- ° Is it developmental (to add additional skills or perspective) or not?
- ° Is it planned or ad hoc?
- ° Is it to satisfy an outside requirement for the qualifications of the employee or not?

- Is it on management's initiative or the employee's?
- Does it involve field assignment or not?
- Is the change for a fixed term or not?
- Are there return privileges or not?
- Is the new assignment within one's own career field or in another?
- Is the move across organizational lines or not?
- Is the new job expected to be more challenging or interesting or not?
- Does the new job offer greater promise of promotion or not?
- Does the new job require change of geographic location or not?
- Does the new job involve greater personal inconvenience or not?

Brief reflection on these dimensions will reveal the difficulty management faces in responding adequately to the preferences of individual employees with respect to assignment. For some assignments there will be an ample supply of qualified candidates, and some must be disappointed. For others there may be a short supply of candidates, or yet the job must be done with the best qualified of the available candidates. Again, the preference of the employee may not be satisfied.

Though only 20 percent of the employees responding thought that there is adequate opportunity to transfer among the various Directorates in the Agency, it is not reasonable to conclude that 80 percent of the employees wish to change Directorates.

For those who are looking for a better or more challenging job within the Agency, their career counselors are available to advise them or, if they wish to change fields, to put them in contact with career counselors

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even in other Directorates. The interested employee can get information about the job outlook and about what he or she can do to enhance qualifications for some desired alternative job.

12. Have you ever served in more than one Directorate?
(Actually held a different position in another Directorate.)

Yes
No

GS 1-4
5-8
9-11
12-13
14-15
16 plus

DDA
DDI
DDO
DDS&T
ODCI



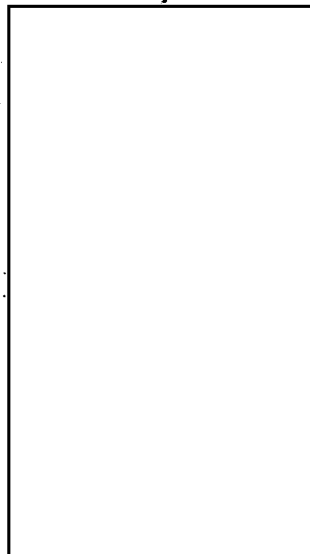
STAT

13. Have you served in more than one component within your Directorate?
(Actually held a different position in another component)

Total Response

GS 1-4
5-8
9-11
12-13
14-15
16 and plus

DDA
DDI
DDO
DDS&T
ODCI



STAT

STAT

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76. Is there adequate opportunity to transfer among the various Directorates in the Agency?

Yes No ?

Total Response

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(Basic pattern of this response holds for most demographic aspects of the response)

77. Is there adequate opportunity for rotational assignments to other positions in your Career Service?

Total Response

GS 1-4
5-8
9-11
12-13
14-15
16 and plus

DDA
DDI
DDO
DDS&T
ODCI

Male
Female

--

STAT

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*But the briefing paper could use some of this material plus some
summary points on the extent of rotation. It should not end at
personnel planning.*

and objectives; the productive employee must not view the procedures as threatening; and the priority given to counseling should be maintained.

3. A structured approach toward inter-Directorate rotation.

A significant amount of rotation has occurred in the Agency but usually it occurs as a result of searching for a man qualified to fill a position that has just become available, and not as a result of the career planning that identifies individuals who would benefit from a tour in another Directorate.

There are different kinds of rotations:

- ° Rotation for the development of the individual, including those identified as possible "successors" for senior grades and those who are in senior grades who can benefit from cross-fertilization.
- ° Functional specialists rotating to exercise their skills in different organizations as required.
- ° Out-of-Directorate assignment to unanticipated job openings that must be filled from the list of available personnel possessing the necessary qualifications.

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Rotations of the latter two types appear to be the most common. During FY 1975, only 50 rotational assignments were for developmental purposes while 96 were to meet needs for skills.

Rotation on the employee's initiative is relatively difficult and beset with obstacles. In response to the survey question, "Is there adequate opportunity to transfer among the various Directorates in the Agency?," 52 percent responded negatively and only 20 percent affirmatively. From the employee's view, greater ease of rotation provides increased likelihood of finding a greener pasture or a more satisfying job. In a compartmented Agency, however, there are informational obstacles that are made more intense by the division into five Career Services. The Inter-Directorate Careers Committee is one attempt to reduce these obstacles.

Management also could benefit from a more structured approach to rotations. Though the number of rotations has been exceeding expectations only 50 of these were developmental, involving persons identified for rotation. The PDP is the primary tool in any effort to increase this number.

In addition, it should be possible to designate a few positions, mostly staff, to be filled through rotational assignment. A corps of senior staff men, moving through such rotational assignments, can provide valuable assistance to management through their perceptions of the interlinkages in the Agency and can provide a quick means of

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communication when the need arises. Within the DDA, a new system is being structured in which each Office designates at least one job for rotational assignment from another Office. Such a system might be expanded.

(Table 1 on FY 1975 Rotations follows)

4. The responsiveness of the promotion process to demonstrated excellence.

A review of data for FY 1976 covering promotions to grades 14, 15 and 16 (selected as a sample) revealed the average time in grade of those promoted was more than four years, but that some 10 percent of those promoted had been in grade fewer than two years. Recent conversations with management officials from private corporations reveal that these data are comparable with corporate practice. One might conclude that a reasonable amount of fast-tracking is occurring.

Of course, such data tell nothing concerning the quality of the promotion judgments. Yet, the career board approach to comparative evaluation provides potentially an excellent basis for assessment and is one that is widely applied in industry now.

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